

IN THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 5. This sheet, which includes Figs. 3, 4, and 5, replaces the original sheet including Figs. 3, 4, and 5.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the present amendment and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are pending. In the present amendment, Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 10-13, 16, and 17 are currently amended. Support for the present amendment can be found in the original specification, for example, at page 5, lines 17-24, at page 7, lines 11-20, and in Figures 1-4. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Abstract was objected to; Figure 5 was objected to; Claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; and Claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Sansevero et al. (U.S. Patent 7,249,667, hereinafter “Sansevero”).

First, Applicant wishes to thank Examiner Hess for the courtesy of an interview granted to Applicant’s representative on January 7, 2008, at which time the outstanding issues in this case were discussed. Arguments similar to the ones developed hereinafter were presented and Examiner Hess indicated that in light of the arguments presented, the amended claims appear to define over the cited references.

In response to the outstanding objection to the Abstract, a new Abstract is hereby submitted on a separate sheet. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding objection to the Abstract be withdrawn.

In response to the outstanding objection to the drawings, Figure 5 is hereby labeled as “Background Art.” Thus, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Regarding the outstanding rejection of Claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, it is noted that Claims 1 and 10 are hereby amended as suggested in the

outstanding Office Action. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection of Claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Turning now to the outstanding rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this rejection and traverses this rejection, as discussed below.

Amended Claim 1 recites:

An escalator, having a pair of balustrades disposed on both sides of traveling steps, comprising:

a balustrade end configured to turn back a handrail belt wound around each of said balustrades;

a skirt end portion having a belt entrance port configured to receive the handrail belt, and an outer edge of the skirt end portion furthest away from the traveling steps extends further in an axial direction of the traveling steps than an inner edge of the skirt end portion closest to the traveling steps to guide items towards the traveling steps; and

an indicator configured to indicate operating conditions of the escalator, wherein

a front face of the skirt end portion includes an inclined surface at a predetermined angle with a vertical plane, and

a display face of the indicator conforms to the inclination of the inclined surface.

Thus, in the escalator described in Claim 1, the skirt end portion has an outer edge that extends further in an axial direction of the traveling steps than an inner edge of the skirt end portion to guide items towards the traveling steps. As explained in the original specification, for example, at page 7, lines 11-20, when a shopping cart hits against such a skirt end portion, the shopping cart is guided towards the direction of the passengers movement down the traveling steps. Accordingly, such a skirt end portion can prevent a jam at the entrance of the escalator. It is respectfully submitted that the cited references do not disclose or suggest every feature recited in amended Claim 1.

Sansevero describes a passenger conveyor 20 including a handrail entry module 32 having a support surface 38 extending down and out from a vertical surface 34 thereof.¹

Additionally, Sansevero describes that the surface 38 is at least partially arranged at an oblique angle relative to a landing 24.²

However, it is respectfully submitted that Sansevero does not disclose or suggest “an outer edge of the skirt end portion furthest away from the traveling steps extends further in an axial direction of the traveling steps than an inner edge of the skirt end portion closest to the traveling steps to guide items towards the traveling steps,” as recited in amended Claim 1.

Instead, as can be seen in Figures 1 and 2 of Sansevero, both an outer edge and an inner edge of the support surface 38 appear to extend a same distance. Additionally, Sansevero does not disclose or suggest that the surface 38 is shaped so as to guide items towards the steps 22 of the passenger conveyor 20.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Sansevero does not disclose or suggest every feature recited in amended Claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection of Claim 1, and all claims dependent thereon, as anticipated by Sansevero be withdrawn.

Amended Claim 10 recites, *inter alia*, a skirt end structure of an escalator, including “an outer edge the front face furthest away from the traveling steps extends further in an axial direction of the traveling steps than an inner edge of the skirt end portion closest to the traveling steps to guide items towards the traveling steps.”

Accordingly, in view of the discussion of Sansevero above with respect to Claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that Sansevero does not disclose or suggest every feature recited in

¹ See Sansevero, at col. 2, lines 30-36 and in Figs. 1 and 2.

² See Sansevero, at col. 2, lines 36-38 and in Figs. 1 and 2.

amended Claim 10. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection of Claim 10, and all claims dependent thereon, as anticipated by Sansevero be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. A notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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